



**USAID**  
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

**TAJIKISTAN**

# FIRST PERSON

## We Can Overcome TB Together

**Patients share their treatment experiences and encourage other patients to get treatment and be well**



Photo: Abt Associates

*TB Specialist Dr. Davlatbekova Mekhrafruz, center, poses with Zamira and another speaker after a special patient support meeting.*

***“It would be very good if someone heard me and as a result decided to continue their TB treatment. I would be very happy if I could help someone to finish their treatment and get better.”***

**— Zamira**

Zamira<sup>\*</sup> began coming to the USAID-sponsored TB support groups four months ago. At age 23, she has already experienced much loss in her life and understood well just how deadly TB can be. Her brother, a labor migrant to Russia, returned to his family in Tajikistan after he was already too ill with TB to be treated successfully. He died at home. Soon after, Zamira’s mother was struck with the illness as well. The family couldn’t afford to pay for her treatment, and she also passed away because of the disease.

Zamira and her two younger siblings also have TB now. But they are lucky because their medications are being paid for by the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria, which the U.S. government also supports.

Zamira has the courage to share her experience and support other patients. As part of a special event related to World TB Day, she visited other patient support groups, shared her story, and encouraged other patients to adhere to their TB treatment. Zamira knows how important it is to take advantage of the opportunity to get treatment. “My mother and my brother got sick in the days before you could get drugs for free, so they didn’t have a chance. Now that you can get drugs for free, please take them. You should complete your treatment because if you don’t you can die from this disease.”

Zamira says that her patient support group made a big difference in her determination to adhere to her treatment, and as a result, she wants to encourage others. “It would be very good if someone heard me and as a result decided to continue their TB treatment. I would be very happy if I could help someone to finish their treatment and get better.”

<sup>\*</sup> *Zamira is not her real name. Her name has been changed to protect her privacy.*